



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

The environmental impact assessment (EIA) is to be submitted with a preliminary plat application and should be a thorough assessment of the impacts of the proposed project. It is preferable to gather the base data prior to subdivision design in order to be most responsive to existing and potential environmental conditions.

The attached list of measures for evaluating the impacts of land development is included here to encourage developers to plan subdivisions which are responsive to local needs and for which negative impacts have been minimized. The list represents planning concerns which should be considered when a project is planned.

The environmental impact assessment should address those items on the list which are relevant to the project in question. Discussion of those items should be from a thoughtful, common sense approach. Detailed or technical studies, surveys, etc., are neither required, nor desired.

The basic outline of the environmental impact assessment should address the following issues in the context of the attached list of measures for evaluating the impacts of land development.

- A. General description of the project.
- B. Description of existing environmental conditions.
- C. The environmental impacts of the project.
- D. Proposed mitigation measures.
- E. Unavoidable adverse impacts.
- F. Alternatives to the proposed project.
- G. The relationship of the project's short-term use on the environment and its maintenance and enhancement of long-term environmental productivity.
- H. Adopted plans and policies relevant to the project.

MEASURES FOR EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF LAND DEVELOPMENT

It is expected and understood that while the evaluation of many of these factors requires the subjective interpretation of the person preparing the report, clear, objective, and factual statements are essential to any adequate impact assessment. The assessment should include the following measures:

- I. Local Economy
- II. Natural Environment
- III. Aesthetic and Cultural Balance
- IV. Public and Private Services
Housing and Social Conditions



MEASURES FOR EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF LAND DEVELOPMENT:

I. LOCAL ECONOMY

Public Fiscal Balance:

1. Net change in government fiscal flow (revenues less operating expenditures and annualized capital expenditures.)

Employment:

2. Number of new long-term and short-term jobs provided.
3. Change in numbers and percentage of employed or unemployed.

Wealth:

4. Change in land values.

II. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Air:

5. Change in level of air pollutants and number of people at risk or affected by air pollution.

Water:

6. Change in level of water pollutants, change in tolerable types of use and number of persons affected, for each body of water or aquifer.

Noise:

7. Change in noise and vibration levels and number of people bothered by excessive noise and vibration.

Soils:

8. Change in wind and water erosion patterns.

Greenery and Open Space:

9. Amount and percentage of change in greenery and open space.

Wildlife and Vegetation:

10. Number of types of endangered or rare species that will be threatened.
11. Change in abundance and diversity of wildlife and vegetation in the development and community.

Scarce Resource Consumption:

12. Change in frequency, duration, and magnitude of shortages of critically scarce resources and the number of persons affected.
13. Change in total and per capita amounts of energy consumed.

Natural Disasters:

14. Change in number of people and value of property endangered by natural disasters such as flooding, earthquakes, landslides and mudslide.

III. AESTHETICS AND CULTURAL BALANCE

Views:

15. Number of people whose views are blocked, degraded or improved.



Attractiveness:

16. Visual attractiveness of the development.
17. Change in overall neighborhood attractiveness, pleasantness and uniqueness.

Landmarks:

18. Rarity and perceived importance of cultural, historic, or scientific landmarks to be lost or made inaccessible.

IV. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES

Hospital Care:

19. Change in availability of hospital services.

Crime Control:

20. Change in rate of crimes in community and in the new development.
21. Change in percentage of people feeling a lack of security from crime.

Fire Protection:

22. Change in fire rates.
23. Change in availability of fire protection to other areas to the new development.

Recreation:

24. Change in number of people within or beyond a reasonable distance from recreational facilities.
25. Change in usage as a percent of capacity; waiting; number of people turned away; facility space per resident; and citizen perceptions of crowdedness at recreational facilities.

Education:

26. Number and percentage of students having to switch schools or busing status.
27. Change in population of schools.

Local Transportation:

28. Change in established patterns and travel times.
29. Change in duration and severity of congestion.
30. Change in likelihood of finding parking spaces convenient to destination points.
31. Change in the rate of traffic accidents (or expert rating of change in hazard presented).
32. Number and percentage of citizens perceiving a change in neighborhood traffic hazard; and change in pedestrian usage of streets and/or sidewalks.
33. Change in opportunity to use bicycles as travel vehicles.

Shopping:

34. Change in availability of stores and services by distance and type.
35. Change in the percent of people generally satisfied with local shopping conditions (access, variety, crowdedness).

Telephone Service:

36. Change in ability of telephone utility to provide level of services.



Gas and Electric Services:

- 37. Change in ability of gas/electric utility to provide adequate level of services.

Solid Waste Services:

- 38. Change in capacity of existing facilities to handle increased loads into the future.

V. HOUSING AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Housing Adequacy:

- 39. Change in number and percentage of housing units that are substandard, and change in number and percentage of people living in such units.
- 40. Change in number and percentage of housing units by type (price or rent range, zoning category, owner-occupied and rental, etc.) Relative to demand or to number of families in various income classes in the community.

People Displaced:

- 41. Number of residents, or workers, displaced by development and by whether they are satisfied with having to move.

Population Mix:

- 42. Change in the population distribution by age, income, religion, racial or ethnic group, occupational class, and household type.

Crowdedness:

- 43. Change in percent of people perceiving the neighborhood as friendly.

Sociability/Friendliness:

- 44. Change in frequency of visits to friends among people in the existing neighborhood and the new development.

Privacy:

- 45. Number and percentage; of people with changes in “visual” or “auditory” privacy.
- 46. Number or percent of people perceiving a loss of privacy.

Overall Contentment with Neighborhood:

- 47. Change in percent of people who perceive their community as a good place to live.

The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that developers, decision makers, and the public-at-large are at least moderately aware of potential environmental impacts when deciding on the appropriateness and feasibility of a project. The International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) defines an environmental impact assessment (EIA) as "the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social, and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made." EIAs are unique in that they do not require adherence to a predetermined outcome, but rather account for environmental values and variables in their decisions and justification of those decisions in light of thoughtful consideration of the potential impacts of the proposal.